

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 IO-10 /075 W

----- 044254

R 281055Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3701

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : PFOR, TC, QA

SUBJECT : AMIR OF QATAR VISITS UAE

REF: DOHA 1435

1. SUMMARY: WHILE AS PREDICTED REFTEL, SHAIKH KHALIFA'S VISIT TO UAE WAS LARGELY SHAIKHLY AFFAIR, IT APPEARS TO HAVE GONE VERY WELL AND SERVED INTENDED PURPOSE OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO STATES. POSSIBILITY UNIFYING CURRENCY SEEMS HAVE RECEIVED SERIOUS ATTENTION, WITH RESULTS AS YET UNCERTAIN. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE, AS NOTED OUR REPORTS OF PREVIOUS VIP VISITS, UAEG IS BECOMING ACCOMPLISHED IN ROLLING OUT WELCOME MAT, GOVERNMENT HERE OUTDID ITSELF IN CASE JUST CONCLUDED THREE DAY STAY BY AMIR OF QATAR. VISIT WAS PRECEDED BY TWO OR THREE DAYS OF CONSIDERABLE PRESS BUILDUP INCLUDING PICTURES OF AND INTER-VIEWS WITH SHAIKH KHALIFA, STORIES ABOUT QATAR AND DOHA, ETC. WHEN HE ARRIVED DEC 21, SHAIKH KHALIFA WAS RECEIVED AT AIRPORT BY BOTH UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID AND VICE PRESIDENT SHAIKH RASHID AS WELL AS BY RULER OR CROWN PRINCES OF OTHER FIVE

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EMIRATES. ZAYID HOSTED STATE DINNER IN HIS HONOR WITH ALL KEY

OFFICIALS PRESENT (INCLUDING MINPET OTAIBA WHO ESCAPED KIDNAPPING IN VIENNA ONLY BECAUSE HE LEFT EARLY TO BE HERE FOR AMIR'S VISIT). SECOND DAY SAW BOTH HORSE AND CAMEL RACES IN MORNING AND BOAT RACES IN AFTERNOON STAGED IN KHALIFA'S HONOR, WHILE THIRD DAY OCCUPIED WITH VISIT IN COMPANY WITH ZAYID TO DUBAI WHERE KHALIFA RECEIVED WARMLY BY SHAIKH RASHID, OPENED NEWLY-COMPLETED TUNNEL UNDER DUBAI CREEK AND MET WITH NORTHERN EMIRATES RULERS. IN SHORT, IT WAS FULL AND ELABORATE PROGRAM--A BIT MORE OF EVERYTHING BEING LAID ON FOR AMIR THAN HAS BEEN PATTERN HERE.

3. IN TERMS OF SUBSTANCE, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT VISIT WAS LARGELY OF CEREMONIAL NATURE AND THAT THERE WASN'T MUCH TIME FOR LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS. FINAL COMMUNIQUE ENDORSED GROWTH OF GULF COOPERATION AND URGED AREA BE FREE OF BIG POWER CONFLICTS. (IN PRESS INTERVIEW PRIOR HIS ARRIVAL HERE, KHALIFA MADE POINT THAT ECONOMIC UNITY HAD TO PRECED POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT AND EXPRESSED HOPE BOTH GULF COMMON MARKET AND UNIFIED GULF CURRENCY WOULD BE ACHIEVED SOON.) IT SAID BOTH RULERS SHARED SIMILAR VIEWS ON ALL ISSUES DISCUSSED INCLUDING, OF COURSE, REQUIREMENT FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. COMMUNIQUE DID ANNOUNCE (AS PER REFTEL) ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE OF COOPERATION IN VARIETY OF AREAS BUT WITHOUT SPECIFICS.

4. POSSIBILITY OF FULL MONETARY UNION, INCLUDING COMMON CURRENCY WAS NOT MENTIONED IN COMMUNIQUE, BUT IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WAS INDEED DISCUSSED. IN FACT, UAE MONETARY TECHICIANS, HAVING PRIOR WORD OF THIS QATARI INTEREST AND SOME INDICATION THAT SHAIKH ZAYID PREPARED RESPONSE FAVORABLY, DID BEST TO DAMPEN ISSUE IN ADVANCE. UAE CURRENCY BOARD (CB) SOURCES INDICATED THAT THEY FEEL QATAR'S MONETARY POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS ARE RUDIMENTARY IN COMPARISON TO THE UAE. MOREOVER, THEY BELIEVE BILATERAL MONETARY AGREEMENT WOULD UPSET MOVEMENT TOWARD COMMON GULF CURRENCY NOW BEING NEGOTIATED WITH KUWAIT AND BAHRAIN. CB POSITION IS THAT FULL MONETARY UNION IS POSSIBLE ONLY IF WATAR ACCEPTS UAE DIRHAM AS ITS MONEY. IN EFFECT, QATAR WOULD SUBORDINATE ITS MONETARY POLICY AND BANKING SYSTEM TO UAE CURRENCY BOARD. THESE VIEWS WERE CONVEYED BY THE CB TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HERE PRIOR TO KHALIFA'S ARRIVAL, BUT WHETHER THEY WERE ACCEPTED BY FONMIN SUWAIDI MUCH LESS SHAIKH ZAYID WE DO NOT KNOW. PRE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUMABLY LACK OF MENTION IN COMMUNIQUE MEANS THERE IS LESS THAN FULL AGREEMENT, BUT WE WILL SEEK FURTHER DETAILS OF DISCUSSION ON THIS POINT.

5. WHILE AT FIRST GLANCE ALL OF ABOVE DOES NOT ADD UP TO MUCH, PRIME OBJECTIVE OF VISIT--TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO STATES AND SMOOTH OVER WATERS TROUBLED AT TIME SHAIKH KHALIFA'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER--SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED.

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